

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Ruwet

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My name is Vincent L. Ruwet, a Lt. Colonel in the Chemical Corps. At the time of the death of Dr. Frank R. Olson I was assigned as Chief of Special Operations Division in which division Dr. Olson was a Branch Chief.

I first met Dr. Olson on the 1st of July, 1951, on which date I reported to the Division. From July, 1951, to January, 1952, we were in intimate contact professionally and on comparable levels professionally, that is, I was Assistant to the Division Chief and he was a Branch Chief. Also during that time we became very friendly socially and I saw a great deal of him and his family both at his home and they at my home.

In January, 1952, I left the Division to undertake the duties of Executive Officer of the Post at which time my daily professional contact was more limited but I did work with him on a liaison basis, particularly, with reference to matters pertaining to the mission of SO Division. Subsequent to that time in August, 1952, I became the Assistant Deputy Director of the Biological Laboratories and my relations with the deceased continued on about the same level. During this period we continued our social friendship on a very close and intimate basis.

In June, 1952, I was assigned as Acting Division Chief of SO Division in addition to my other duties. In October, 1953, I was appointed Division Chief, which fact seemed to please Dr. Olson, very much.

During the period just covered Dr. Olson was Branch Chief until October, 1952, at which time he was prevailed upon by Dr. Schwab and myself to become Acting Chief of SO Division by reason of the fact that Dr. Schwab had left the Division. Dr. Olson did this reluctantly since he said that he w

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adverse taking on administrative type of work and preferred closer touch with the laboratory bench. Dr. Olson carried on as Acting Division Chief until 1 March, 1953 at which time he was removed at his own request to revert to Branch Chief, his old job, and in addition to his other duties Special Assistant to the Division Chief.

During the period described above and before the experiment my estimate of Dr. Frank R. Olson is as follows:—

His personality was that almost of an extrovert. He liked a practical joke, did not carry it to excess.

Socially, he was very popular, "life of the party" type. He was the first one on hand to assist anyone who might have troubles either professionally or personal. He and his wife were extremely popular persons on the Camp.

As a professional man my estimate of his ability is that he was outstanding. The extent of my contact with him has already been stated from October (professionally and at work) from July, 1951, to January, 1952, the contact was daily.

From January, 1952 to June, 1953, it was probably on the order of 2 or 3 times a week. From June, 1953, until his death the contact was daily. At all times from June, 1951, and until his death my social contact with him and his family was intimate.

For the period in which I have knowledge my estimate of the performance of his duties officially was satisfactory to outstanding. I would say that from the cumulative standpoint and in comparison with other scientists doing similar type of work he was outstanding.

During the period prior to the experiment my opinion of his state of mind

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was that I noticed nothing which would lead me to believe that he was of unsound mind. He had the normal family worries, (worries that I consider to be normal). Occasionally he had trouble with his ulcers but was always reluctant to discuss personal troubles with anyone.

Professionally he was making very fine progress particularly in the last year and was most successful in the work he was doing.

I would further like to intert as regards to this personality or personal habits that he did smoke and did take social drinks but did not use either to excess.

The experiment took place Thursday, November 19th, 1953 in the evening. I saw Dr. Olson on Friday morning. We had breakfast and he appeared to be agitated and at the time I did not consider this to be abnormal under the circumstances.

Immediately after breakfast on Friday morning, November 20th, Dr. Olson came to me and had asked if I would object if he rode back to "home-station" with Mr. Champlin. I stated, "Of course, not; that it was perfectly all right with me."

The next time I saw Dr. Olson was on Monday morning, 23rd of November, 1953. I came to work about 7:30 and Dr. Olson was waiting for me in his office. He appeared to be agitated and asked me if I should fire him or should he quit. I was taken "a-back" by this and asked him what was wrong. He stated that in his opinion he had messed up the experiment and did not do well at the meetings. I talked with Dr. Olson for about a half hour and further discussed it with him stating that in my opinion he had the wrong impression - that I thought he did very well at the meetings and in

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his participation in the experiment was above reproach. He appeared to be satisfied and relieved.

We attended two professional appointments together and I noticed nothing unusual except that he appeared to have some difficulty in concentrating. We also had lunch together on that date. He did not eat very well; I did notice that. We attended an official movie and meeting at 1530 that afternoon. He was riding home in a car-pool that night and immediately after the movie he said, "so-long," and ran to catch his car.

The next time I saw him was the following morning, Tuesday, 24 November, 1953, when he again was waiting for me in my office when I came to work, about 7:30 a.m. He appeared to be greatly agitated and in his own words, "all mixed up." He said he felt that he was not competent, that he had done something wrong. When questioned closely he could not say exactly what he thought he had done wrong. He made reference to the fact that he thought he should not have been retired for physical reasons but when this was pushed he shifted to the fact that he felt incompetent to the type of work he was doing - when this was pursued he seemed to look for something else which he had done wrong.

After about an hour of discussion it became apparent to me that Dr. Olson but needed psychiatric attention. I continued the discussion in such a way as to attempt to get him to suggest that he needed some help. This he did, finally. Dr. Stubbs, who was present, and I immediately agreed that this was our opinion also and I suggested to him that I call Mr. Robert Lashbrook and arrange for such assistance. This he agreed to and said that he would go to at once and discuss the situation with his wife, which he did.

I immediately called Mr. Lashbrook and explained to him what the situation

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was and expressed the opinion that Dr. Olson was in serious trouble and needed immediate professional attention. Dr. Lashbrook said that he understood and would take immediate action. Meanwhile Dr. Olson had been discussing this with his wife. I received a call from his wife asking if she could come along and I told her that she could. We were to go to Washington, D.C. for further assistance.

Shortly after this Dr. Lashbrook called back and wanted to know what time we would be in Washington since he had arranged for an appointment in New York with a psychiatrist and that he would obtain air reservations for us to go to New York. About 5 minutes after that Dr. and Mrs. Olson arrived at the office. We went from there to my home where I changed from uniform to civilian clothes and we ^{were} driven from my home to Washington by Mr. John C. Malinowski.

En route Dr. Olson appeared to be greatly agitated, highly suspicious, and in his own words, "all mixed up." We stopped at the Hot Shoppe restaurant in Bethesda, Md., to have lunch. Dr. Olson ordered lunch but ate or drank very little. He appeared to be highly suspicious of food or drink. We then proceeded to Dr. Lashbrook's office. I went in and saw Dr. Lashbrook and explained the situation to him again. Dr. Olson stayed out in the car with his wife and Mr. Malinowski. I found out later that he had asked Mr. Malinowski to leave the car so that he could talk to his wife, which was done.

After about 15 minutes I came out and suggested to Mr. Malinowski and Mrs. Olson that they leave us there and that we would get to the air-port with Dr. Lashbrook who was going with us. We proceeded for the air-port and left for New York as I can estimate the time now, about 2:30 p.m. Nov. 24.

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During the trip Dr. Olson's condition appeared to be about the same. He was very anxious and he had the feeling that someone was out to get him. He didn't appear to be quite sure why, etc..

We arrived in New York without incident, proceeded from LaGuardia Airport to Dr. Abramson's office; arrived there approximately 5 p.m. ^{SP} We left Dr. Olson with Dr. Abramson who requested us to come back in about 1 hour.

After an hour we came back and Dr. Abramson suggested that we go to a hotel and we told him we had reservations at the Statler Hotel. He stated that he would come up to our room about 10:30 with some sedatives and also suggested that we have a "high-ball." Dr. Olson, Dr. Lashbrook and I went directly to the hotel, sat and talked for a while, then went to the cocktail-lounge, had a Martini and then went to dinner. Dr. Olson drank a Martini but refused to drink a second one. He ate very little; still appeared to very suspicious, of Dr. Lashbrook and myself.

After dinner we went back to our rooms, discussed various things and Dr. Olson asked to talk with me alone. Again he appeared to very anxious upset and kept asking, "What's behind all this? Give me the low-down; What are they trying to do with me; are they checking me for security, etc." I did my best to re-assure him and tried to show him wherein factually he was imagining these difficulties and thought I had convinced him, at least, he said that he thought things were clearing up and also he said that he thought Dr. Abramson could help him.

About 10:30 p.m. Dr. Abramson came and brought a bottle of bourbon and some "Mebutal." for Dr. Olson. We sat around and had just a good, serious discussion and a couple of "high-balls." About mid-night Dr. Abramson

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said, "Well, it is time to go to bed." He suggested to Dr. Olson that he take a "Nembutal" which he did at that time and that Dr. Olson take another should he have difficulty sleeping. By the way Dr. Olson had complained to me from the start that he had not been able to sleep after Thursday. He said that he got no sleep. Dr. Olson fell asleep. The undersigned remained awake.

Dr. Olson fell asleep immediately after going to bed and I heard him get up about 3 to go to the bath-room. He came to bed but obviously could not fall asleep as he was tossing and turning and talking to himself. I don't remember what he was saying. I asked him about that time if he would take another Nembutal and he said no. Finally about 5:30 a.m. he appeared to be upset again and I suggested that he take a Nembutal; he agreed and took it. We started discussing the situation over again - the content of the conversation was almost identical to what it had been before. Then he went back to sleep, or I believe, at least rested until about 9:30 a.m. on the morning of the 25th of November, 1953.

At this time he got up, watched television and the three of us, Dr. Lashbrook, Dr. Olson and myself went to breakfast. He ate some breakfast and appeared to be a little better although he ^{was} still been in a rather bad state in my opinion. We then accompanied Dr. Lashbrook, at Dr. Lashbrook's suggestion, on an official visit which he had to make. During this visit Dr. Olson again became highly suspicious and mixed up. When this became apparent we tactfully cut the visit short and left. We went from there to the doctor's office for the 4 o'clock appointment. We left Dr. Olson there and picked him shortly after 5 o'clock. Dr. Olson had requested that he return home for Thanksgiving dinner so that he could have dinner with his family

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and this was agreed to by Dr. Abramson who suggested that we make an appointment to come back up on Tuesday, 1 December 1953. I asked at that time he would like to have me come with Dr. Olson or if Dr. Olson should come. He said this was entirely up to Dr. Olson - if he wished he could come and if he wished to have company it would be perfectly alright for me to come. Then we left Dr. Abramson's office; came back to the hotel and at my suggestion got tickets for a musical show, "Me and Juliet." We went out to dinner and from there to the show which started at 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Olson appeared to get upset during the first act and at intermission he was highly agitated and stated that he knew that people were outside waiting to arrest him on his departure from the show. I tried to reassure that I personally ^{would} guarantee him that he will be in Frederick or at home the following morning and that he would be there with his family for Thanksgiving. He stated that he didn't believe me and I told him, "Well, he said so and that I would give him my word of honor that this would be so." I pointed out that we had the plane reservations. I suggested that maybe he didn't want to see rest of the show and that he and I talk and walk. To this suggestion he quickly agreed. We left the theatre with him and he was in a very anxious state. We walked back to the hotel from the theatre, talking all the while and by the time we arrived at the hotel he appeared to be more relaxed. He went back to the hotel-room, talked and watched television, discussed going home the following day, and Dr. Lashbrook ^{had} stayed for the remainder of the day and came in about 11 or 11:30 p.m. We talked for a little while, called the desk to arrange for being called in time get out to the airport the following morning. The call was arranged for 5:30 a.m. I went to bed and unfortunately I fell asleep, did not hear anything until 5:30 when the phone rang. It

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the hotel operator waking us up. I flicked on the light; Dr. Olson was not in his bed and his clothes were gone.

I immediately informed Dr. Lashbrook who was in the adjoining room and we dressed, went down to the hotel lobby as speedily as possible and there we found Dr. Olson fully dressed with his over-coat and hat on sitting in a chair. He stated he was walking around in the streets and that in the process he had disposed of his identification button, his wallet and his money. He stated that he had done this because I had instructed him to do so since I was with him. I told him that I wasn't with him; he said, "Yes, that's right, I must have been dreaming." Since there was no time to ~~waste~~^{waste} we decided against looking for his wallet and identification badge, immediately went up to the room, shaved and dressed; Dr. Olson also shaved. We checked out of the hotel; got a taxi and went to LaGuardia Airport in time to make a 7:30 plane. Plane was delayed approximately one hour because of mechanical difficulties. We arrived in Washington; Dr. Olson appeared to be more relaxed at this time.

Dr. Olson ate on the plane and slept the entire trip, (1 hour). We arrived in Washington were met by Mr. Malinowski, Thursday, Nov. 26th, (Thanksgiving Day.) We got in Mr. Malinowski's car and headed for Frederick.

In north-west Washington on Wisconsin Avenue Dr. Olson asked if we couldn't stop the car and talk this thing over and I asked him if there was anything wrong and he said, "Well, I would like to talk things over." We stopped in the parking lot at Howard Johnson's on Wisconsin Avenue near Bethesda-Chevy Chase Woodward Lothrop store. He asked Mr. Malinowski to leave the car as he wanted to discuss something with me - Mr. Malinowski complied. He told me he could not go back to Frederick since he was so mixed up. He was ashamed to meet his wife and family, and requested to

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just let him go and would go off by himself. This told him I could not do. He then asked me to turn him over to the police since they wanted him anyway. We discussed this at considerable length and he appeared satisfied - that the police did not want him. I then suggested that maybe he would like to go back to see Dr. Abramson. He agreed to this suggestion.

I then called Dr. Lashbrook and told him what the situation was and he told me to take Dr. Olson to his apartment immediately. This was done. We decided to take Dr. Olson back to New York to see Dr. Abramson and it was decided that since Mrs. Olson was entitled to know what the situation was and because she was expecting him for Thanksgiving dinner I should proceed to Frederick to brief Mrs. Olson. Dr. Olson appeared to be very much upset and agitated. Again, all mixed up. This was the worst that I had seen him, since the experiment took place. This ^{was} the last time I saw Dr. Olson.

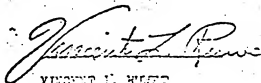
On Friday evening, approximately 10:30, November 27th, I received a call from New York from Dr. Lashbrook who stated that reservations had been made for Dr. Olson at Chestnut Lodge in Rockville, Maryland and that they had plane reservations for the following morning and were scheduled to arrive in Washington at 9:34 on the 28th of November. ~~This was~~ ^{He} suggested that I meet the plane which I agreed to do. I then asked if Dr. Olson was still speaking to me in a rather jolting manner. I heard Dr. Lashbrook ask him this question and his answer was, "Why, yes, let me have the phone." Dr. Olson appeared on the phone quite relaxed. He told me about the trip in the morning, about the fact that he had reservations at Chestnut Lodge. I told him that I knew the latter as Dr. Lashbrook had

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told me so. I also told him I would meet the plane. He suggested that I not do so since that day was Saturday and he knew that I probably had work to do around the house. I told him to think nothing of that and that I would meet him. He said, "fine. I'll see you in the morning." This is the last time I spoke to Dr. Olson.

At approximately 2:45 a.m. Sat. Nov. 28th, 1953, I received a call from Dr. Gottlieb with a message that Dr. Olson had died.

I HEREBY CERTIFY TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.



VINCENT L. HUNTER
Lt. Col. G-10
Chief, SD Division
Camp Detrick
Frederick, Maryland

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